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Sketches of the Great West.

A

JOURNAL

OF

The Santa-Fe Expedition,

UNDER COL. DONIPHAN,

WHICH LEFT ST. LOUIS IN JUNE, 1846.

KEPT BY

JACOB S. ROBINSON,

Of Portsmouth, N. H. a Member of the Expedition.

PORTSMOUTH JOURNAL PRESS.

1848.

The first regiment of Missouri mounted volunteers mustered into the service of the United States at Fort Leavenworth, on the 6th of June, 1846, and on the 22d of the month they commenced their march under Col. Doniphan across the plains for Mexico. After a march of fifty-seven days duration they entered Santa Fe. On the 16th of June, 1847, after having performed a remarkable march of six thousand miles, this regiment reached New- Orleans, to be there discharged, as their enlistment for a year was nearly expired.

This body of men conquered the states of New-Mexico and Chihuahua, and traversed Durango and New-Leon. During the whole year not one word of information reached them from the government, nor any order whatsoever. They lived exclusively on the country through which they passed, and supplied themselves with powder and balls by capturing them from the enemy.

The journalist, (a son of Abednego Robinson, of Portsmouth,) is an observer of nature, and although engaged in some daring adventures, looks with more satisfaction upon the scenery of the new country through which he passes, than upon the exploits of the battle-field.

JOURNAL OF THE SANTA FE EXPEDITION

UNDER COLONEL DONIPHAN.

On the 23d June, 1846, two companies, A and D, of mounted riflemen, started from St. Louis, Mo. for Santa Fe. The country near St. Louis is beautiful; and our men, glad to escape from the strict discipline and monotonous confinement of the fort, sent up a shout of joy that ran through all their ranks, as they inhaled the clear air of the green and sunny prairie. That joyous shout rings in my memory yet; and though connected with much of our subsequent travel amid hunger and thirst and suffering in a thousand forms, still its remembrance shall be cherished as that of a golden moment, when life and youth and health broke over forms, and rejoice in hope, even though that hope may never be realized.—After travelling about twelve miles, through a fine country, mostly prairie, with groves of trees on some hill-sides, and one singular mound resembling an island—we encamped for the night at Twelve Mile Creek, with settlements of the Kaw or Kansas Indians on our right.

Here we caught plenty of fish, and found a bee tree from which we furnished ourselves with honey. One of our company, named Ferguson, was bitten by a rattle-snake. We gave him rattle-snake's master and a quart of whiskey, which seemed to have little or no effect as to producing inebriation, but soon relieved the pain of the bite, and the man rapidly recovered.

On the morning of the 23d, dark and heavy clouds tinged with red hung over the eastern horizon, threatening rain: nevertheless we took up the line of march; but soon the rain came down upon us; and after travelling thirteen miles over a fine flowery prairie, we encamped, wet, cold and hungry,—finding our rations barely sufficient for us. The 24th being still rainy, we travelled only six miles, passing some excellent timber and a fine mill-stream, and meeting several Indians, who were well clad and apparently comfortable.

On the 25th, after having passed an uncomfortable night, we passed the Kaw or Kansas river, and found the country beautiful; being the flower-covered prairie, spotted here and there with fine groves of walnut and plum, as though planted by the hand of man to make it a magnificent garden. The bottom lands on the Kansas are sandy, and show plainly the great overflow to which they are subject. In getting our wagons up the banks, we were obliged to attach ropes to them, and set the part of horses.

The Shawnee and Delaware tribes of Indians have settled here. The Shawnees have fine farms, and are quite a civilized people: the Delawares are a little behind them: both tribes speak the English language more or less. They keep a ferry-boat here, in which we crossed the river. The

keeper of the boat said he had made four hundred dollars this season, by the crossing of emigrants bound to Oregon. We purchased a beef steer of them for four dollars, paying for it ourselves; for Uncle Sam finds us no beef. These half-civilized Indians differ very widely in character from those in their native wildness. Having learned from us the virtue of avarice most perfectly, you can get nothing of them, not even a cup of milk or an onion, without paying them the most extravagant prices.—We were surprised at the neatness of their houses, and their fine gardens and fields, in which they equal if they do not excel us. Their freedom, equality and common lands give them many advantages not to be had in the States. They appear to be honest, industrious, and generally virtuous. It is not to be wondered at that some of the half-wild western pioneers, becoming acquainted with the dark-eyed daughters of the prairie, should be so fascinated as to leave the life called civilized, for a life on the wide wild prairie, where the flowers grow, the birds sing, and nature is decked in beauty.

On the 26th we left the Indian settlements with sincere regret, and entered the wilderness of prairie, in which, however, our company travelled but five miles, halting for company A to come up, but did not see them.

I was detailed with 10 others on the 27th, to take charge of the wagons; we soon lost sight of our company and missed the trail: after some wandering I fell in with company A, and encamped with them.—An express was then sent to our company, informing them that they were on the wrong track, which would lead them to Oregon instead of Santa Fe. We have come this day 25

miles, in the morning through a country somewhat broken, occasionally rising into mounds or islands. These are all of the same uniform height, and perfectly level on the tops. They are surrounded and defended at the edges by small rocks, but the tops are fertile.—At last in the evening we ascended a bluff some 200 feet, which continued in a long level ridge until we reached the plain, which is beautiful beyond description, and fertile beyond the imagination of those who have never visited the valley of the Mississippi. It is perfect prairie, covered with bright flowers and green grass as far the eye can reach, and broken only by a few ravines which run into the prairie below.

The next day we struck the main road to Santa Fe. By much travel this has become as plainly marked as any highway. On this we travelled 20 miles across the treeless but fertile plain, to 110 Mile Creek, where we encamped for the night, enlivened by the presence of a trading party on their return from Santa Fe. On this creek there are trees bearing an abundance of plums. These wide prairies are entirely destitute of game, as the buffaloes never come so far down, and as the deer have all been hunted out if they ever lived here. This day we lost a horse; he fell down a precipice and broke his neck.

We waited in our camp on the 24th, until our company came up, and then travelled 10 miles to Sullivan's Creek, where we found good grass and good water. Next day we advanced 20 miles, to about three miles from the end of this day's march, we came to a good spring of a fine branch. We encamped at 142 Mile Creek, where the water is not but the timber good, consisting of burr-oak and black-walnut. The prairie here is somewhat

gravelly. Every foot of ground over which we have passed as yet is capable of the highest cultivation; but it must be a long time before it can be settled, owing to the scarcity of timber.

The weather having been extremely hot for several days, we travelled only eight miles on the first of July, to Shell Creek, the banks of which are lined with flint rock, and the country is much poorer, but would still by a New-England man be counted rich. Our encampment is at Council Grove, so called probably from the fact that many of the Indians of the present day meet and hold their councils here. It is also a recruiting place for caravans to and from Santa Fe. Here we met more Santa Fe traders and wagons, and found company D, which arrived before us. The grove is about a mile wide, composed of good timber, oak and walnut, having on its west side a fine stream, with steep banks near 50 feet in height. In the grove there is a spring of good water, and near it is the famous Big John Spring, which gushes out from beneath a rock on which many persons have carved their names. The Red Root grows here, and makes a good tea, equal in flavor to the Chinese, and said to be very wholesome. On the banks of the creek we found an abundance of red cherries growing on small bushes. Here we cooked provision for two days, as there is no wood for 50 miles ahead, and probably no water.

On the 2d of July we advanced 18 miles to Diamond Spring, where we found plenty of large black gooseberries; five miles beyond, we encamped on the prairie. On the 3d, as perceive the prairie has become a plain, verdant and vast, meeting the blue sky at the horizon on every side. From the extreme flatness of this plain, at

might naturally be supposed to be a very wet place in time of rain. The vegetables growing here, however, do not sustain this idea, for they are the common prairie grass, rosin weed, bull's eye, red root, &c. On this plain we passed a muddy spring called the Poison Spring, from the fact that live stock drinking its waters and grazing near it, are apt to sicken and die. We also passed some beautiful white limestone. Encamped on the Cottonwood Fork of the Arkansas, a singular stream with banks from 40 to 60 feet, which are covered with cotton-wood from the plain to the water's edge. Here we found some of the largest musquitoes.

July 4. This morning we all took a drink of whiskey in honor of the day; but are obliged to march on, as the rations we have are nearly gone, and if we cannot overtake the commissary wagons we shall have nothing to eat but our horses. We reduced our ration one-third, travelled twenty-five miles, and encamped at Good Water. The prairie has become drier, and the eye tires with its monotony. On the 5th, we travelled 25 miles, overtook the wagons, (to the great joy of the hungry,) and encamped on the Little Arkansas, a muddy creek. Here for the first time, we saw the prickly pear and buffalo grass.

On the 6th day of July, we left our encampment at the Little Arkansas, travelling before breakfast to get water: but on arriving at Owl-Creek were disappointed at finding it dry, and pushed on to Cow-Creek, where we found only a few puddles: but gathered some ripe plumbs, and got a little brush for cooking. Five miles further on, found plenty of water and encamped, having travelled 12 miles. Next day, after 20

miles travel, we came to the Arkansas River. It has very low banks, and a perfectly firm bottom, which make it fordable at almost any place. The land here is sandy, resembling the light soil of New-England. Here are antelopes, an abundance of very large grass-hoppers, thousands of little lizards or cameleons, horned frogs, prairie dogs, &c. These little dogs, (smaller than a rabbit,) set up their barking as we came to one of their towns, but ran into their holes on our near approach. Some of these dog-towns are very extensive, one of them being three or four miles in circumference, and the ground so full of their holes or burrows, as to make it sound hollow like a bridge, when travelled over. A little owl and a small rattle-snake are frequently seen inhabiting the same hole with the dog. The latter no doubt does all the digging, and the other occupants are mere interlopers, that crowd themselves in. We passed a singular mound covered with plumb bushes, and shortly after witnessed the deceptive phenomenon of the water mirage. About a mile distant from us appeared a crystal lake, studded with numerous islands, so perfectly defined that no one could imagine it to be any thing else than a real lake. Though prepared for the illusion, many of the men believed it real, bet upon it, and of course lost their bets. Nothing here appears as it is. Weeds and grass sometimes loom up like trees, and hills become mountains or jutting promontories. As we advanced, the water apparently receded, and at the same time became more extensive, until on the west and north as far as the eye could reach, the deep blue waters rolled: but when we came there, it was nothing but the same level prairie, covered with the like grass, and destitute of ridges, water and trees.

On the 8th we travelled 4 miles to Walnut Creek, and 25 miles to Pawnee Fork. This is the region of storms and tornadoes, but the land is fertile. 15 miles west of Walnut Creek, stands the famous Pawnee Rock, near which a hard battle was once fought between 3000 Pawnees and 60 traders, in which the latter were victorious. The rock is singular in its appearance, rising abruptly in the midst of the prairie—and on it are carved innumerable names. In this vicinity we saw the first great herd of buffaloes we had met with. I climbed up the rock, from the top of which I witnessed one of the grandest sights ever beheld. Far over the plain to the west and north was one vast herd of buffaloes: some in column, marching in their trails, others carelessly grazing. Every acre was covered, until in the dim distance the prairie became one black mass, from which there was no opening, and extending to the horizon.—Every man was astonished. We had heard of the large numbers frequently seen, but had no idea such an innumerable herd could be gathered together. Most of them were travelling south, (probably for water) so as to come across our path. Their front ranks very obligingly made way for us for about two miles; but as the main body moved on they could be kept off no longer. They rushed through our ranks, throwing us into complete confusion; stopped the further progress of our wagons; and though an hundred shots were fired at them, we could not drive them away until the crowd passed. We killed 40 of them—cooking our meat by fires made of buffalo-dung, which burns as well as charcoal.

At Pawnee Fork, where we staid till the 11th, met and joined Capt. More's command, of 300 Dragoons, 25 government wagons, and 150 trad-

ing wagons. Here we caught plenty of fish, and found a species of wild bitter squash. On the 10th we had rain with heavy thunder. Some few days after this, when the main body under Gen. Kearney's command came up, Pawnee Fork was too deep to be forded; and when, after waiting for the waters to subside, they did cross, two men were drowned.

On the 11th, took up the line of march, with Capt. More and his command; concluding to go up the Arkansas river, on account of the scarcity of water across the country. The regulations hereafter to be observed by us, are much more strict than heretofore, on account of our increased numbers. Travelled this day 35 miles, passing several dog-towns, and observing the owl and rattle-snake at almost every hole. On the 12th, 30 miles up the Arkansas, where the bottom is wide and the banks shallow, we found water by digging two feet any where. I should suppose good crops might be raised here, as the plants would draw nourishment from beneath when rain failed. Encamped on the Arkansas—and as no wood was to be had, the men scattered themselves about to pick up a few little chips that the river had cast on its banks, little fragments of the buffalo-fuel, or any thing that would burn. In doing this, they formed some amusing groups. Our guards were fired upon last night by two Indians, who escaped in the darkness. This day we passed by a place where appearances indicated that about 2,000 Indians had encamped for the night. Next day we had a military drill, and travelled only 10 miles. On the 16th we passed the crossings of the Arkansas, where some traders had arrived before us by crossing the country. An express returned from Bent's Fort,

informing us that the Mexicans were preparing to meet us, and that 2500 Camanches were encamped only eight miles from us. For the next three days, our route was up the Arkansas, over a level road of gravel, as smooth as a McAdamized highway. The south side of the river is lined with sand-banks, which are covered with a whitish crust of a taste slightly salt. Good grass abounds, also wild squashes in great numbers. Saw antelopes, rabbits, and a few single buffaloes.

On the 19th travelled 30 miles. The traders' wagons keep up, though drawn by oxen. Game is getting scarce, there is no timber, and we depend on weeds and grass for fuel to cook with. Passed Sandy Creek on the 20th. All the branches of the Arkansas which we have passed since leaving Pawnee Fork, have been dry. To-day we had a regular Arkansas storm, tremendous wind and thunder. What few trees are seen, on the islands, plainly show the severity of the storms to which they are exposed, being branchless, and mostly with broken tops. On the 21st went 15 miles further up the Arkansas, and encamped within two miles of Bent's Fort, where we expect to remain till the main command comes up. The face of the country has changed considerably: the river is pent in by bluffs; and a mountain far to the west, looks to us like a low black cloud. The days are hot; but at sundown a breeze comes from the mountains, making the nights so cool that we need two or three blankets for a covering.

On the 24th I visited the fort. It is a block of buildings in the form of a square, about 100 by 150 feet, with the centre open. The buildings are a blacksmith's shop, carpenter's shop, store-house, eating-room, government room, and many lodging-

rooms—together with a castle 100 feet square, in which the stock is kept at night. It is built of *Adobes*, or unburnt bricks: the walls 6 feet thick, earth floors and similar roof, supported by rails and logs laid across the top of the walls. The Messrs. Bents have in their employ from 100 to 150 men, whose business it is to trap and trade with the Indians. They have good mattress beds, which are spread on the floors; and every thing is kept neat and clean. Many of the men have Indian wives. We found here Gov. Boggs' son, who has married Mr. Brent's daughter, a half-breed. The women are dressed very well, wear moccasins trimmed with beads about the ancles, which are very small. All who live here seem contented,—They sell rum for 24 dollars a gallon, and tobacco four dollars a pound; other things in proportion. Among other furniture they have a billiard table. They keep a large stock of mules and horses.—They have attempted the cultivation of corn and vegetables, and succeeded very well; but the Indians frequently destroying their crops, they had to abandon it. They have a farm at Pueblo Fort, where the crops have also been destroyed by the Mexicans this year.

While we remained at Bent's Fort, the first death and burial took place in our camp. Some of the dragoons got intoxicated; and one of them, after having a fight, went into the river to bathe: he returned and lay down beneath a tree, where in a few moments he was found dead—reported to have died of apoplexy. This was on the 24th of July; and on the next day we were called to attend his funeral. He was dressed in his blanket, and laid on a rude bier which was hastily constructed of willows. The flag of his country hung

by his side; his horse was in front as chief mourner, saddled and bridled, with boots and spurs inverted in the stirrups, and sword, pistols and carbine across the saddle. The band sounded the slow and solemn notes of the dead march, as we bore his body to the grave, over which 24 guns were fired; and with a lively air from the band we returned to camp. The next day five men were tried by a court-martial for insubordination, and sentenced each to carry forty pounds of sand every two alternate hours during a day.

The heat is so intense from 9 o'clock in the morning till four in the afternoon, that it is almost impossible to move about. Our guns become so hot we cannot handle them, and the sand burns our feet—but the nights are cool and pleasant, and the atmosphere is so clear that the stars retain their brilliancy till they sink beneath the horizon.

On the 29th of July a company of Infantry came up, from Cole county, and one from Platte. They appear in good spirits, and in better health than the mounted men. The men who had been detailed from our company to guard the wagons, also came up to-day, and reported that two men were drowned at Pawnee Fork, one died at Pawnee Rock, and one at Fort Leavenworth. On the 30th we moved 10 miles down the river to join the command, which we found on the opposite side of the stream. In the evening, there was a stampede among the horses, occasioned by the falling of a limb from a tree; when in an instant five hundred frightened horses (with their lassetts and pickets* flying about them) ran wildly

*Lassetts are the ropes or straps with which horses are tied to graze; and pickets are pieces of wood driven into the ground, to which the lassetts are made fast.

down the Arkansas, leaping ravines and tumbling down banks where it would have been impossible to drive them. 80 of them were never recovered.

Another company came up on the second day of August. Our force now consists of 1800 men, viz. 1400 mounted riflemen, 200 infantry, and 200 artillery. The whole marched five miles up the Arkansas and encamped. Next day travelled 15 miles up the Arkansas. The country becomes a desert, extremely hot; the wind blows from it as from a heated oven, causing soreness of the eyes and bleeding at the nose.

On the 4th of August we left the Arkansas, and travel 30 miles across a desert country. This has been a trying day: the heat intense, thermometer 120; clouds of dust almost suffocate the men, who are in confusion, and grumbling. Water-mirage appears, but no water; and last and worst the dreaded Sirocco or hot wind blows, which burns us even through our clothes. The only vegetation here is some bunches of dry grass, and now and a bunch of prickly pear, which seem to tell how desert a country it is. At the place where we encamped found some brackish water. Five horses died. The discontented men say, Let us be anywhere rather than in this desert.

On the 5th we find the country more broken, and the hills covered with a stunted evergreen, which affords our eyes considerable relief. We encamped at the Hole in the Rock. This is a large hole in the sand rock which forms the bed and sides of a branch. The hole now contains the water which ran in the branch during the rainy season. Stupendous rocks are on each side; and it is inaccessible to horses on every side; so that the whole regiment were under the necessity of wa-

taring them by means of buckets. No grass was to be had; and eleven horses died.

On the 6th, we marched 25 miles, and encamped at Piquet river, where we found good water, but little grass, and that dry. Black locust and cottonwood timber abounds, with some pine, and plenty of plums and cherries. Saw many deer and antelopes. Next day our road was among the mountains; pine and mountain-ash are the growth; we encamped again on the same river, leaving 9 more horses behind.

Our road on the 9th was exceedingly rocky and mountainous; the soil sandy and water good. With four others I ascended a peak about a mile high, and was surprised to find it entirely level on the top, containing about 1000 acres. The scenery to the north and west was extremely grand, mountains piled on mountains in the vast distance, and the peaks covered with eternal snow. On the 10th we crossed a very rocky ridge, and after travelling 15 miles, encamped on the Rio Colorado, one of the mountain branches of the Red river. To-day a young man named Moore, died in the wagon as we were travelling. As this was the first death that had had happened in our company, we halted and buried him with the honors of war.

On the 11th, we encamped on a small but beautiful stream of good water, where we found good grass, and wild flax four feet high, with excellent lint, every way resembling domestic flax, excepting that its seeds are not quite so large. On the 12th and 14th we had heavy rains. Nevertheless, we travelled 20 miles on the 13th, and 15 next day, over a high plain, and encamped on the Moro river, finding good grass, but little wood. On the 15th we passed a settlement on the Moro, where

an Irishman has settled alone, and has nearly 1000 head of cattle and mules, but cultivates no ground.

At night we encamped at the town of La Vegas, where the houses are built of adobes, or sun-dried bricks. Each house has a little port-hole at the back side, which answers also the purpose of a window. The people appeared cheerful and glad to see us. They cultivate corn and wheat: the corn is small; the wheat as good as usual in the States. The soil is sandy and dry; and no crop can be raised without irrigation. The Mexicans brought us cheese, bread, mutton, onions, &c. which they sold us at very high prices. They have very large flocks of sheep here, which constitute their principal wealth. We understand that 5,000 Mexicans are five miles ahead of us, at a pass which they intend to defend.

This promise they did not fulfil; but on the 16th the town of La Vegas surrendered, and the chief men took the oath of allegiance to our country. We marched on, and the 5,000 Mexicans retreated to another and more distant pass, said to be more difficult and easier to be obstructed. We passed another town, which also surrendered, and the magistrates took the oath. These towns are built in the form of squares, with port-holes on the outside, that they may protect themselves from the Indians. The road passes through the town; all the doors are on the outside, and every house has a separate oven of clay built in front of it. These towns contain about 400 inhabitants each, who subsist chiefly by their flocks. On the 17th, we passed San Miguel, which is about the same size as the other two places, but rather better built, some of the houses being two stories high;

and the people are more wealthy. The alcalde here had some reluctance to taking the oath of allegiance; but when he was told there was no alternative, he submitted, and swore as he was required to do.

We understand that we shall probably meet the Mexicans to-morrow at another pass. Last night we took two Mexican prisoners, who were men of some note, one of them being a relative of Gov. Amigo. He remarked to Gen. Kearney that although the position of the Mexicans was so strong at the pass, he could tell him how to defeat them—just fire five or six cannon, no matter which way, and he would ensure them all to run. To this Gen. Kearney replied that if that was the case, they must be a very cowardly people. But the Mexican said, far from it, they are very courageous; but they do not want to fight; they had rather be under your government than under our own. Before we reached the pass, however, on the 18th, they had fled, without waiting for the firing of our cannon. They retreated about 15 miles, and encamped in the mountains around us. It is a novel sight to see 200 camp fires lighted up among the rocks and hills and trees, with the men moving from fire to fire like so many spirits.

On the 19th day of August, we marched through the pass from which the Mexicans had fled, and on a careful survey we saw how easily five hundred good soldiers might have completely destroyed us. The rocky cliffs on each side were from two to three thousand feet high, and the fallen trees which they had cut down, lodged up our way. We all felt very well satisfied to pass without being attacked. We had all felt very brave before; but we now saw how difficult it

would have been to have forced the pass, and were glad to be beyond it. After a march of 35 miles, without grass for our horses, we at length came in sight of Santa Fe. The city at a little distance more resembles a parcel of brick yards than any thing else; but in passing through we found it of considerable extent. The houses are all built of *adobes*. The city is full of corn and wheat fields: the corn is now fit to roast, and the wheat not quite ready to harvest. The people supply themselves with water from three beautiful streams that run through the town, having their sources in a lake to the north-west. With them they also irrigate their cornfields. We entered the city just as the sun was sinking behind the distant mountain; and as its last rays gilded the hill top, the flag of our country triumphantly waved over the battlements of the holy city; minute guns fired a national salute, and the long loud shout of the troops spoke the universal joy that was felt at the good fortune that has attended us. But we leave the city to encamp —the men weary and hungry; no grass, no wood, and nothing to eat, as our wagons have been left behind.

On the 19th, our men, hungry and ill-natured in the camp, seemed disposed to fight among themselves, as there was nobody else to fight. One of the volunteers, named Hankins, was tried by a court martial, for the misdemeanor of an assault upon an officer; and was sentenced to be drummed out of the service.

I went to the square, where I found cheese for sale, weighing about 2 lbs, for 25 cents; a biscuit for 25 cents, and other little things in proportion. The women I do not think pretty, but there are exceptions. With half the regiment I was detach-

ed to go and find grass, and graze our horses; but after marching out five miles, finding no grass, we returned as we came.

On the 20th travelled 25 miles to a branch called Galestee; where we found some grass and water. The weather was a cold rain, every thing wet, and the men in ill humor. Next day we learned that three cannon were concealed in the mountain in our neighborhood; and twenty men were accordingly detailed to go and take them: but Capt. Weightman and his artillery were there before us. On the 23d we moved two miles down stream, where the banks are thickly incrusted with salt, and all the springs highly impregnated. Visited the little town of Galestee, containing about 200 inhabitants, who are more filthy than border Indians.

On the 25th—we are still moving about, and grazing our horses as well as we can. One spring noticed by us to-day, has made a deposit of salt around it, several inches in thickness.—Lieutenant Oldham was broken of his commission, and dismissed from the service. The cause of his discharge was his daring to interfere in behalf of his men, in order to obtain something for them to eat. Our allowance now consists of half-rations of flour, or rather shorts, as the best flour has been sifted out of what is sent to us—half rations of beef, from the worn down thin cattle which had been driven across the mountains drawing loaded waggons. We have no pork or bacon; no coffee, sugar, rice or molasses. As there is abundance of every thing around us, the reason why we are allowed so little to eat is a mystery, and will probably remain so. We can imagine no reason for such a course, unless it is to be economical, or to

reduce us, so that we may become more light and active riders. Whatever the reasons are, they are no doubt very wise in the view of those who withhold from us the food for want of which we suffer.

Sixty men from each company took up the line of march, on the 30th, for some other towns on the Rio del Norte. Snow was discovered this morning, on the tents as well as on the mountains: and on the 4th of September we had a hail-storm.

It is astonishing to see the heavy loads which the Spanish and Mexicans pile upon their jacks and mules, putting four or five bushels of salt upon the smallest of them, and as much as 400 pounds upon the strongest. Mexicans pass almost every day, on their way to and from a salt lake, which is situated about 40 miles south of us. It is four or five miles in circumference, and the salt is said to be six feet deep on the shore from which they shovel it up. The salt is of good quality.

I went out on the 10th, to see the remains of an old Indian town about two miles from camp. The ruins occupy a space of about 100 rods square: the walls of some of the houses are still perfect: it must have been a town of considerable importance, though the oldest people in the neighborhood have no tradition when it was inhabited. Near the ruin we found large quantities of broken earthen ware. On the top of a mountain near by is a fort which overlooks the town.

We found a fine sulphur spring on the 15th. Our men are, or pretend to be, very fond of the water; and imagine it conducive to health. Our horses are improving rapidly. The detachment of 60 men from each company have just returned to camp, which is now upon the Galestea, 40 miles South of Santa Fe. This month has been warm-

er than August, and equally warm as the same month usually is in the State of Missouri. The health of the camp is generally good—and if as some affirm abstemiousness promotes health, it could hardly be otherwise,—for we get scarcely any thing to eat, beyond what will barely stay our hunger.

An order came on the 17th of September, for companies D. F. and G. to proceed forthwith to the country of the Nebajoe, to treat with them so as to prevent their committing farther depredations on the stock of the Mexicans who live upon the Rio del Norte. This order has occasioned a great deal of confusion in camp; for many of our horses are missing, and foot cavalry is not a very pleasant branch of military service. To add to the excitement, Col. Ruff has resigned, to accept a captaincy in the regular army. Capt. Hudson has also obtained permission, and is beating up for a company of volunteers for California. We were also surprized by the appearance of a large grisly bear, which had come down from the mountains and established himself in camp, apparently for the purpose of reconnoitering and learning tactics. Not a gun was loaded when he came, and consequently some time passed before he was killed.

On the 19th we took up our line of march, and travelled 20 miles in a south-west course over a poor and sandy country. On the 20th, we held an election of Lieut. Col. to fill the vacancy occasioned by the resignation of Col. Ruff; and made choice of Capt. Jackson, of company G.

The grass is so poor that many of our horses strayed away and were lost. Another man, and myself went with our horses to a clump of willows three miles distant, where was some little grass;

and slept there. It was a delightful night, bright starlight, and all was silent but the murmur of the water in the stream, as it leaped over the rocks, and the horses as they cropped the grass around us, now and then interrupted by the wild howl of the wolves, which to our astonishment in the morning had killed and eaten two horses, which had become entangled in their lassetts, and probably thrown. The farms here are fenced with adobes, about 4 feet by 2. They appear to make a good fence.

On the 21st day of September, 1846, we marched eighteen miles, and encamped at St. Domingo, a Parbelo village on the Rio del Norte. The inhabitants raise an abundance of melons, which constitute a large portion of their food. When the melons are nearly ripe, they peel and dry them for use during the year. The people here are very industrious and generous, giving us melons, and inviting us to eat with them. We had no means of paying them, as all our knives, buttons, extra shirts, &c. had long since been bartered for bread, and we had received no money since we had been in the service.

Next day we travelled 18 miles down the Rio del Norte, passing several towns on the Rio Kuco, and on the 22d went twelve miles further in the same direction. The country improves, the Rio bottom is three or four miles wide, is well cultivated, and produces an abundance of grapes, apples and peaches. Today fifteen or twenty Parbelo Indians came to us, and were anxious to join us and fight the Nehejos; but this of course could not be permitted. The largest onions I ever saw are raised here: I measured one to-day that was 20 inches in circumference. We passed some fine

groves of cotton-wood, from the tops of which the inhabitants trim off their fuel, never cutting the trees close down to the root. A town we passed to-day, bears the very appropriate name of Sandeh, signifying Water-melon.

On the 24th we crossed the Rio del Norte at Albuquerque, a place of considerable importance, the residence of Gov. Amigo: travelled five miles, and encamped at a *rancho*, or farm: where we found good grass, and saw cornfields that would average 50 bushels per acre. Here I saw a process of spinning and weaving: the spinning-wheels are turned with a crank by one hand, while the roll is held in the other: their looms are similar to our common looms, but they have enormous shuttles. The owner of this establishment was very liberal, giving us melons, and corn to boil and roast.

We left the river on the 26th, and struck off due west for the land of the Nebajos; feeling in a measure like leaving home, to strike out into a wilderness hitherto untravelled by the white man. The grass is good, though the soil is so sandy that the horses sink to their fetlocks at every step.—Encamped on the Rio Perco, a muddy branch of the Rio del Norte: the banks showed that it had lately been very high, occasioned by a heavy rain which fell three days before. The evening was one of singular beauty: but afar in the west lay a dark cloud, from which at intervals the bright lightning streamed; yet we lay down to sleep, unconcerned as usual, with our tents none too well staked down. About midnight we were aroused by a general sweep of tents, which left us in the open air; and camp-kettles, mess-bags, hats, blankets and every thing else that the wind

could find, went flying and rolling away in the darkness, leaving us bare-headed and bare-backed to a little the hardest rain it has ever been my lot to witness: but at length when morning came, by the light of day we found most of our hats, jackets and blankets, safely lodged in a clump of willows near by.

On the 26th we travelled twenty miles west, and encamped at a pool of water, with poor grass and wood; the country mountainous. The upper layer of the mountains here appears to be red sand rock, mixed with red ochre or Spanish brown; then a layer of beautiful white sand rock; and beneath this is another, from 50 to 100 feet in thickness, of gypsum or plaster of Paris, of which large quantities are already pulverized, resembling the best Liverpool blown salt. The Mexicans on the river plaster their houses with it, both inside and out. To day two of our wagons broke down, which caused us to remain encamped the next day, waiting for them to come up: as we frequently miss our meals when they are behind.

On the 28th we travelled 16 miles to an Indian town called Lagoona. It is built upon a rock: the houses are two stories high; many of them three; all of them are built of rock, and are entered at the top by means of ladders. When families retire for the night, they pull in the ladders, and each house becomes a sort of castle. These Indians are very inferior in their stature and appearance: they are probably descended from the subjects of the ancient Montezumas: and very few of them speak the Spanish language. They insisted upon our eating with them. Their food consists mostly of melons, pumpkins and parched corn; but they make a singular kind of paste

bread, which in appearance very much resembles a hornet's nest, and which they prepare with great care and skill, in the following manner: They choose a flat rock, two feet wide by three or four feet long, and six or eight inches thick; make it quite smooth on the top, and kindle a good fire beneath it: when the stone is hot enough for their purpose, fine indian meal mixed thin with water is poured and spread rapidly over the smooth hot surface, and is thus cooked instantaneously. The bread comes off as smooth as the surface of the rock; is about as thick as common paper, and being quite flexible, is folded up after the manner of a newspaper,—and the corn from which it is made being blue, its color is exactly like that of a hornet's nest. This bread, when packed up, is excellent for a journey.

Their manner of grinding corn is also worthy of notice. Five or six women sit behind as many hoppers, each of which is composed of a curved rock, placed in a box. Each woman holds in her hand a rough stone, about 18 inches long, and three or four inches in diameter: with one hand she occasionally throws corn upon the large rock, which she rubs with the smaller stone until the corn becomes meal. An equal number of women sit in front of the same hoppers, singing a wild Indian song, by the notes of which the mills keep regular time in grinding. It is a very quick method, and I think quite preferable to grinding, which is frequently practiced in the west.

These Indians had the day before taken four Navajo scalps, and were now celebrating the war dance; it commenced with a low growl, mingled with the beat of their drum, and an occasional growl. The only words I could distinguish were

ha ha, ho ho, which were repeated continually. The song gradually became louder and the dance more wild: and when the scalps were after a time removed from the room where the dance had been so far celebrated, to the public square, they placed them on high poles, around which they beat their drum, sung and danced most furiously, now and then shooting at the scalps, and rent the air with their loud shout of triumph. They invited us to participate in their feasting and dancing, which some of us did. The usual continuance of a dance is 24 hours.

The town contains about 2000 inhabitants. The chief is a singular man, with a deep voice, resembling the low notes of a double bass viol. The people were very anxious to obtain cartridges, and any thing else which would help them carry on the war against the Nebajos. Here is one of the most singular marks of civilization ever seen among the Indians. Across a ravine is built a dam of rock 150 feet long, and 50 feet high: this stops the water that comes down from the mountains in the rainy season, and forms a lake six or eight miles in circuit, where otherwise there would be a dry plain. In the dry season they let out the water as they need it upon their lands; and thus raise good crops, and support two thousand inhabitants with large flocks, where but for this contrivance would have been nothing but the wild and arid desert.

On the 29th, we travelled ten miles, and encamped among the mountains. In the winding way of the valley as we came up, were numerous cornfields, with here and there an Indian hut, high on the hill top or beneath the mountain cliff. All the women, both Spanish and Indian, in this

upper country, render themselves more hideous than they otherwise would be, by painting their faces with the juice of a kind of cornstalk which is very red.

On the 30th of September our attention was again called to the death and burial of a comrade. B. F. Gwin died last night in camp, and we buried him to-day. It is astonishing to see how reckless and careless we all become, and how little we think of a death in our midst. The frolic, the wild shout and the joyous laugh are mingled with the groans of the dying, and are heard beside the dead: but our poor comrade sleeps his last sleep, and our untimely mirth cannot disturb him. We buried him in the bosom of the hills, with the mountain rock above him; bestowed on his burial all the military honors of which our little detachment was capable; and raised at his head a slab of sandstone, on which we inscribed the initials B. F. G. Co. D.

This is certainly a badly managed campaign. No medicines and no wagons are provided for the sick: we have to jumble them over the rocks and mountains, in our broken wagons, among the camp kettles and pork barrels. A poor chance is this when one is sick: what can he expect but to die? Those who are well have to live on half rations, and sleep in the open air—the sick have nothing to eat but salt pork and wheat meal or rather bran. Why government has seen fit to starve this detachment remains yet to be explained. Both the sick and well travelled about ten miles to-day, and encamp near a place called Sabriote, or Onion-town, where water and grass were scanty and poor. Here we saw the natives making molasses from cornstalks. At night went to a Fandango, or dance. Their

most popular dance is called the *cuna*, and is very pretty. We sent in an express to Santa Fe, for provisions, &c. as it would not be safe to advance further without a fresh supply.

October 5, 1846. Still we lay at our camp near Sabriote, which is a place of about 500 inhabitants. The weather is very pleasant, thermometer rising to about 70 at noon, and sinking to 40 at night. To-day we killed a large grizzly bear. Here are numerous heaps of stones, with crosses, which mark the places where Spaniards have been waylaid and murdered. Many people here live to a great age, which is evidence of the general health of the country. For want of other employ we amuse ourselves by playing poker and ball. Our horses are kept out among the mountains, and on the night of the 6th they took a stampede; but we hope to recover the most of them. The Nebajos, as we learn, have left a corn-field, which is said to be about ten miles from us, to which we think of removing, if we can find a pass through the mountains.

On the 11th our express returned from Santa Fe, and brought news of the capture of California by Fremont: and also brought an order for us to proceed immediately to make a treaty with the Nebajos, or fight them, for the protection of the people on the river: so that we must go, provision or no provision. In consequence of this order, thirty men were chosen (ten from a company) to go on this service; as it was not thought advisable for any more men to go with nothing to eat. The command of this expedition is given to Capt. Reid. We are to visit the Nebajos, and if possible prevail on the principal chiefs to come in to Santa Fe, and there treat with Col. Doniphan. But four

days' provision could be obtained; and as it will be ten or fifteen days before we can get any from Santa Fe, there will probably be some hard times, especially for us thirty, who are to go we know not whither.

On the 12th, we started on our expedition. A friendly Nebajo, named Sandeval, goes with us, as a guide to their country. We felt again like leaving home, as we left the last settlement of the Spanish-Mexicans. As we rode by them where they were harvesting corn, their parting salutation, "God be with you," was spoken and apparently wished by every one. We wound our way along between the mountains, and seemed pent up by them, as we encamped at the last cornfield of the last settlement. Here we find good water, &c. We take a few pack mules, but no tents or wagons; and sleep in the open air. The chief Sandeval has with him a son, a fine boy about twelve years old. This tribe of Indians have probably had less intercourse with the whites, or with any civilized people, than any other nation of Indians. The weather is fair, but windy and cold, with frosts at night.

On the 13th the Spaniards who were to accompany us and drive the pack mules, were rather late in being on the ground and packing their mules; but at length we started and wound our way for two or three miles up the valley, which is pent up with overhanging rocks. At the head of the valley is a small mill, which is turned by a little stream of water conducted through a hollow log, and falling upon one side of a horizontal wheel. I had no opportunity to enter and examine it; but it is certainly a method whereby an extremely small water-power supplies a considerable

number of people with meal. We now came to the mountains, up which we had to scramble three or four miles: a feat which was performed with the greatest difficulty, by leading our horses, and climbing ourselves as well as we could, over the rocks and cliffs. At length we reached the summit, pretty well exhausted. After resting a short time, we resumed our march in a westerly course, over an elevated plain, completely covered with loose, black, heavy, porous rocks, over which it was extremely difficult for our horses to travel. The peaks, rising on our right and left, were covered with snow. At length we descended into a valley, which is the residence of Sandoval, who with his son drove in several horses. Here we found good grass, water and wood. Distance travelled 25 miles. The range of mountains over which we passed, is the principal ridge separating New-Mexico from California—the tops of which are covered with pine, except some peaks which are bare of wood and are covered with snow.

Travelled on the 14th over a much better road; sometimes pent up by mountains, then expanding to a plain, and again a loose sandy soil and mud rock. Passed a great number of Indian camps: they are mostly round, built of rock, are about eight feet in diameter, four feet high, and are covered with poles and dirt. These camps are not their residing places, but merely retreats in case of storms, when they have their flocks in the neighborhood. Passed a singular hole in a rock which was full of water, from which we watered our horses and drank ourselves. Distance travelled 30 miles: good grass. A Nebajo Indian came to camp to night, and appeared cold and fatigued. Water froze last night an inch thick.

On the the morning of the 15th we got an early start, as Sandeval told us we had a long march to make without water,—and travelled over a country mostly barren, except now and then patches of underwood. From the top of a ridge we had one of the most beautiful views I ever saw: a wide plain lay before us, pent up by cliffs; while twenty miles to the west, perhaps, arose another range of mountains, covered with dark green pines. After travelling these twenty miles we reached the mountains, beyond which Sandeval had told us was the water. We reached the top just as the last gleam of twilight departed from the horizon, when afar in the distance we saw the gleaming of a fire which Sandeval had gone forward and kindled, and which reflected its light from a lake. As we went on, up and down over hill and valley, sometimes the light appeared nearer, and again more distant, until we had become almost disheartened, and concluded it was all a delusion, perhaps a jack-o'lantern,—when at last, on ascending a steep bluff, we found ourselves suddenly at the edge of a beautiful lake on the summit of a hill. We had travelled sixty miles to-day over a desert country; were fatigued and cold; had no grass for our horses, no wood to make a fire, and nothing to eat. Twenty of us lay down to sleep, while the other ten stood guard.

We found an old Nebajo chief at this lake on our arrival; and were visited, on the next morning, by ten stout men of his tribe, with cattle, stolen no doubt from their Spanish neighbors. No information of any importance was obtained from this party; so we travelled on forty-five miles over a similar country, only rather more sandy, and bearing more timber. At length on descending a

bluff we discovered a larger party of Nebajos: as we advanced they collected into a group on a hill-top, where we met them with many compliments and much ceremony. They were about thirty warriors and eight or ten squaws; dressed in splendid Indian attire, having fine figured blankets and panther-skin caps, plumed with eagle feathers; were all well mounted, and proved to be a party of chosen Braves, who had been sent forward to invite us and guide us to the heart of their country. They are very active in all their movements, mounting and dismounting their horses in an instant. At the place where we met them was another lake, which from its appearance we named Coffee-Lake. Found only very poor bunch grass. The Indians gave us mutton and pumpkins, which we were glad to receive,—and told us we must ride another day, as Narbonah their great chief was sick.

On the morning of the 17th of October a novel scene was presented—the Indians catching their horses with the lasso, and catching the lasso from the ground when at full speed. We proceeded on our journey, accompanied by our Indian Braves. Passed over some good grass; and after forty miles march struck camp, where we found no grass but plenty of wood and water. Here the Indians came in in great numbers, and began preparing to celebrate a dance. They were very curious to examine our guns, and were astonished when shown the properties of a revolver. One of our men showed a watch, which excited great attention: on placing it to their ears they would start as from a snake. At night they hung all their bows upon the limbs of a cotton-wood tree, and commenced their dance, which resembled the Purbe-

ber, and in which some of us took a part. So we danced with the Purbeles over the scalps of the Nebajes, and with the Nebajes over the Purbeles. It is astonishing how soon our confidence in each other was almost complete,—so that we mingled in their dance, and they in our camp traded for such little "notions" as our men happened to have with them, for which the Indians gave us mutton and bread. They appeared much pleased at our coming to their country,—and informed us that a great many years ago they had made a treaty with some of our brethren; that they still possessed the articles of agreement, and would show them to us to-morrow; but they informed us, to our sorrow, that we must go on another day yet to see Barbanch, their great chief, when they would return with us and make another treaty if necessary, with our great Captain. We accordingly took up our march on the 16th, accompanied by about 400 warriors and as many women, all mounted on beautiful horses; the squaws apparently as good riders as the others. After traveling about 15 miles we came to their camp, where we found large flocks of horses and sheep, and groups of Indians engaged in several games of amusement. Here likewise we found no grass, but concluded to trust our horses to the care of the Indians, who offered to drive them out where they said there was very good grass, and return them on the morrow. It was in fact our only course, as we could not protect them ourselves if the Indians had been disposed to take them; neither were they able to travel back over the road we had come without something to eat. We found it impossible to keep the Indians from our encampment, so eager were they to see our arms and place ammunition. Some

of the principal chiefs continually exhorted them to come away from our camp and not by any means to molest us. There was almost a continual trading going on between our men and the Indians in the way of barter; such as a cotton shirt for a hunting shirt of buckskin, a tin cup for a lasset, or a buckskin for a small piece of tobacco, or for a butcher knife, or for buckles, straps, &c. so that few of us returned with many of the clothes we wore there, but had exchanged them for buckskins and blankets, and dressed ourselves pretty nearly in the Indian style. The women of this tribe seem to have equal rights with the men, managing their own business and trading as they see fit; saddling their own horses, and letting their husbands saddle theirs. To day were exhibited several scenes of the chase, by rabbits being started from the brush; when in an instant five hundred riders at least were on the chase. No fox or steeple chase can equal it: the Arab cannot excel the Nebajo in horsemanship; and better horses can hardly be found. The plain was covered with these mounted warriors, with their feathers streaming in the wind, their arms raised as for conflict; some riding one way and some another; and in the midst of these exciting scenes they indulge in the wild Indian yell, or shout of triumph, as they succeed in capturing their prey. It was a sight unequalled in display of horsemanship—and can be seen nowhere but in the wild mountains and plains of the west. —Many of the young men among the Indians amuse themselves with practising the lance. Two men take each a lance pole, divested of its lance; one of them has a ring made of buckskin, wound so as to be solid and round, and six or eight inches in diameter. The one who holds the ring, watches,

an opportunity and rolls the ring, when both run and throw their lances at it. The victor in the game is he who first throws the lance completely through the ring. This requires much activity, is extremely exciting to them, and by means of it they acquire great dexterity and skill in throwing the lance. Hundreds were engaged at this game. I saw also at the same time many young women engaged at a game resembling dice, played with three bones, which they threw upon a flat rock, around which were placed a circle of small pebbles, about 100 in number, which they used as counters. At this game the women bet their beads, buckskins, &c. and became very much excited. An old Indian who stood by, and who could speak a little Spanish, pronounced it *Mug Wano*,—and led me to a crowd where a dance was going on. For an instrument of music they had an earthen jar, made fast to a stake: over the mouth of the jar was bound a skin, which constituted their drum; and on this a big-mouthed old warrior beat at regular intervals, accompanying every blow with a scream from his mouth. This delightful union of vocal and instrumental music governed the step of the dance, which was different from any I had before seen, and was performed by seven of the young women, all arranged according to size and dressed in scarlet blankets, who stood side by side and stepped at the beat of the drum to the right or left as they had room in the ring. The dance was conducted with great regularity and decorum; an oration being delivered as an interlude between all the dances, but upon what subjects I could not find out. One man only was allowed to stand at the head of the ladies and join in each dance, but the same one was not allowed to occupy the place twice.

Some of the women were also employed in spinning; which is done by means of a stick used as a spindle, one end of which is set in the ground, and is turned rapidly by hand; and as fast as the wool is spun out and the yarn twisted, it is wound upon the spools. In this manner they spin the finest and most beautiful yarn. I did not see their manner of weaving, which I very much regret, as they manufacture extremely fine blankets of many colors, wove in a manner unknown to us. Their common blanket, woven in stripes of blue, black and white, can be purchased from them; but they always refuse to sell their fine party-colored blankets, and any offer to buy one from them is received as an insult. Trinkets, beads and tobacco have been offered to the amount of $100 for one of them; but though this sum would buy half a dozen horses, yet the Indians steadily refused to sell the variegated blanket or *poncho*, which they look upon with pride, as a badge of national distinction and superiority. Both kinds of their blankets are perfectly impervious to water, which may be carried in them without spilling a drop. These Indians also weave baskets of willow so tight that they hold water. In fact most of their water vessels, some in the shape of jars, bowls, &c. are made of willow; and they appear to me better than earthen ware, as they are lighter and not so easily broken. They also understand the manufacture of a coarse kind of earthen ware; though it is but little used. They are of good stature, and of fairer complexion than any Indians I have ever seen: the women are treated by the men as their equals: and they are undoubtedly the most enlightened tribe of wild Indians inhabiting this continent. They are a band of mountain rovers;

a mounted tribe; living on their horses and by their stock, which they drive wherever they can find the best grass. There they sleep in the open air, sometimes on and always among their horses. They are well provided with blankets and skins, and may be considered wealthy. In the cold weather of winter they remove to their town or fort upon the Rio St. Juan, which is said to be one of the strongest places in Mexico. This place is occupied at all seasons of the year by old and worn out warriors, women and children; and is a kind of storehouse of all their surplus articles of trade, as well as of the corn which is raised in the neighborhood. It is also the head-quarters of their manufacture of blankets, clothes, baskets, &c.

The women are very pretty, having small feet, but it is impossible to determine the size of their ankles, as they bandage them with deer-skins till they appear as large as their bodies. This of course is done to render them more attractive and beautiful. They wear brass rings upon their arms, the larger the better; and in following their fashions they fully equal, if they do not excel, the most fashionable of our own cities. They carry their infant children in little willow baskets, made just long enough to contain the child when the cover is closed: these they fasten to their backs, and so trudge along, carrying their load with ease and comfort to both mother and child. Both sexes of the Nebajos wear long hair; the men tying up theirs in a cue, or binding it to the head like the women—which distinguishes them from the Purbelos, who cut their hair short in front. The Nebajos are a distinct people, having very little intercourse with the Mexicans or with any other tribe of Indians, and consider themselves much their superiors.

We had one great talk with them, which ended in an agreement of their principal chiefs to go back with us. They had promised to show us an agreement or treaty which they or their fathers had made with our fathers long ago. Accordingly they brought and laid down with great solemnity, in our camp, a large roll of buckskins; informing us that in the roll was preserved the treaty, which they had made 700 winters before. They commenced unrolling, and took off skin after skin; at last they came to a blanket, which with increased solemnity they proceeded to unfold, and which contained only a trader's printed handbill, which the chief with a grunt handed to our interpreter. This farce of course created a general loud laugh in our ranks. When the chief was informed that the treaty had nothing to do with us, he tucked it away, its value having apparently departed.—He had undoundedly thought to deceive us, and make us imagine them greater friends than they really were.

As night came on the scene changed. An hundred fires were lighted up in every direction round our camp: about these fires the Indians were gathered; and the beat of their rude drum, accompanied by their harsh song of *ha ho, hi ho*, ceased not during the night. We were in the midst of a desert, surrounded by a nation of powerful savages, whose numbers were great, and whose friendship was doubtful; who had us completely in their power, and who might be treacherous. We kept ourselves ready, if it should be necessary, to sell our lives as dearly as possible. The night, however, passed in peace; and the morning sun of the 13th found us ready to return and join our companions. The horses were soon

brought in by the Indians, and then ensued a lively scene of traffic. Most of our men swapped away their horses for mules; the Nebajos putting but little value on the latter, because they are not swift enough for the chase. Some of the Indians accompanied us three or four miles on our way.—The chiefs are to start in two days, and intend to overtake us. We were advised by the principal chiefs to keep a sharp look out, as some of the Indians who are bad men might steal our horses. We encamped, after travelling about twentyfive miles, on good grass, but with no water. At night a Zuni chief came to us, and informed us that he was sent by his tribe to invite us to come and see their women and children: he told us that on his side of the mountain they were very honest; that three of his children had been taken prisoners by the Mexicans and much stock stolen, but if he could obtain his children he would be satisfied; and that they had never yet made war against the Mexicans, and never should. Capt. Reid advised him to go to Santa Fe and see the governor.

The Zunians are a tribe somewhat similar in their habits to the Lagoonies, living still more by themselves, and distinguished for good behaviour and industry. Sixty of our men who afterwards went among them were treated very kindly: and one of them, who was obliged to remain on account of sickness, I have heard many times speak in the warmest terms of their kindness to him during his illness; and when he recovered two of them accompanied him to the river, where his comrades were quartered. Near Zuni are the ruins of a town, in which some of the rooms are yet entire, and which was apparently built entirely under ground, there being three stories beneath

the surface; but of the people who ever lived in the city, the oldest Indians have no knowledge or tradition: they say that it was the same 1000 years ago as it is now.

The Zuñiani, Lagoonies and Nebajos, have little intercourse with the Spaniards, have introduced none of their customs, and very few of them understand the Spanish language. The Zunians and Nebajos claim to be brothers, although their methods of living are so very different: the former living at home, and depending upon their flocks, and the cultivation of their grounds; and the latter being a band of mountain rovers, only retreating now and then to their houses and their flocks.

On the 20th of October we took an early start; stopped to rest at the Lagoon, and went on 10 of Sandoval's miles, which we found to be about 20, over a rough-and-tumble route, amongst rocks and gullies. Night overtook us, and the men, strung out and scattered amongst the rocks, kept up a continual shouting and screaming in order that none should get lost; the path being very obscure. At last we came to water, and were soon encamped for the night. Distance travelled to-day 35 miles. On our route we passed many Indians returning with their flocks to their homes, which they had left under the impression that we would destroy them and their flocks. Some of them encamped with us to-night. A shower passed to the south of us with considerable thunder. This country is a series of level, sandy plains and rocky mountain ridges. One would suppose from the appearance of the rocks, which rise perpendicularly, that a recent flood had levelled the plains which they girt, as the soil still remains plastered

to them high up their sides; which seems to indicate that the plain was once, and it would appear very recently, even with their summits. The water here is impregnated with some alkali, as it washes very well without soap. On the 21st, we travelled about 20 miles, and where we encamped found good water in a hole in a rock.—And on the 22d, travelled 40 miles over a rough and mountainous country. Near our route to-day is a burning mountain. We passed abundance of coal strata, from four to ten feet thick. To-day my horse gave out, and being behind my company, I was overtaken by some Indians, of whose friendship I had no assurance: but to my surprise and joy, one of them insisted on my riding his horse into camp, an offer which I gladly accepted,—and the next day made a farther bargain with the Indian for his horse. We reached the camp of our companions on the 24th; and were glad enough to get back, as we had been out of rations for some time: but we found our companions in the same condition. The mountains over which we passed to-day were covered with snow, and the weather was very cold. Saw some oak trees, two feet in diameter, apples, pines, &c. At camp we find good grass and water; travelled to-day about 30 miles.

Sandeval, (who was our guide in the late expedition,) is rich: he has 5000 sheep, and 100 horses. His situation is one of the most beautiful, being on an elevated plain, 3000 feet above the level of the country, and the mountain rising to snowy peaks behind it. Springs of pure water gush from the rocks, and find their way in rivulets across the plain to the precipice, down which the waters leap, scattering their spray to the winds.—

A view of the green grass and fine trees, with his beautiful fields of corn and wheat, make one almost forget that it is the abode of an untutored Indian.

We find the men at camp on the 25th, amusing themselves with horseracing; running four or five races a day, and betting freely. A few days before a party of Nebajos came down and stole forty of their horses,—and a command of sixty men under Capt. Parsons had been sent in pursuit. The horse which I left with the command was one among the stolen: so that I have lost both of my horses, one broken down and the other stolen by the Indians.

On the 27th some of the sick were removed to better quarters in town, as the weather is rapidly becoming colder, and our quarters more and more uncomfortable. October 28. It rained and snowed hard all last night. One of our men had been to a fandango about five miles distant, and in attempting to return lost his way: he had to pass the night in the open country with the wolves about him, and found himself in the morning a little farther from camp than when he started from the fandango. This morning the ground is covered with snow: some of the men went to the mountains to hunt; found the snow quite deep, and saw some bears, but killed none.

Oct. 30. A company of about 50 Spaniards, who had organized themselves for the purpose of making war upon the Nebajos, to-day reported themselves to Col. Jackson, but were not received. They were poorly armed. On the 2d of November, the 60 men under Capt Parsons returned, with 27 of the stolen horses, very much broken down, evidently by being ridden very hard. The

men report that a part of the Nebajoe are still for war; and that it was impossible to obtain the rest of the horses. These men were out 12 days, and saw some hard times for food. They saw but few Nebajos, and they seemed to be shy and fearful of our men.—We moved our camp to-day, four miles north, beside the mountain, where we have good water and grass. At length some provision has arrived. We have been living the last two weeks on pumpkins and parched corn, which the Indians had left behind. Nov. 5. To-day we learn that Col. Doniphan was at Lagoonia yesterday, and will visit us. An election was held yesterday for third lieutenant, which resulted in the choice of Wm. Hickland. Three companies of Price's regiment have come to Lagoonia for the purpose of relieving us, and we are to proceed down the Rio del Norte, where it is rumored 3000 Mexican troops have collected to resist the progress of the traders, and have killed two or three men, but how much truth there is in the report, we cannot say.

Nov. 10. Col. Doniphan having arrived, concluded to wait some few days, to see if the Nebajoe would not come in according to promise: but as they have failed to do so, he has concluded to make an expedition against them. The day before yesterday we had a high wind, and the day was very cold, though to-day is pleasant. We killed three grizly bears, several black tailed deer, and a grey squirrel. The deer and squirrel are larger than those of the States, and have very large and long ears. The men at camp in their idle hours practice throwing the lasso, at which many are becoming quite expert. Most of us are getting clothed in buckskins and moccasons, so that we look like a camp of Indians. Many of the men

are sick, and winter stares us in the face, with the prospect of not a little suffering.

On the 17th of November, 1846, a part of the command left for the Nebajos, under Col. Doniphan, with the determination to make a treaty; and the rest of our company, consisting of about thirty men, started for the river, to receive our payment of clothing money, having lived for six months by hook or by crook, without money.—The morning was gloomy; the low snow clouds hung half way down the mountains, and concealed the white and frozen peaks, while the falling snow driven by the fierce wind, made it altogether one of the most uncomfortable days I ever experienced. We travelled seven or eight miles, and encamped. The snow had ceased to fall, and just as the sun was setting it burst forth and lighted up the snowy clouds, telling us the storm was over. We made the best of the night, but it was uncomfortable; and most of the men chose to sit by the fire, rather than to lie down on the cold ground.

We took an early start on the 18th. The weather was extremely cold, and unprepared as we were for winter, we felt it keenly. The snow was two or three inches deep; and at noon day the frost-covered twigs and grass glittered in the sun. I have rarely seen a colder day in Missouri. We stopped an hour or two to warm ourselves at Lagoonia, and found the inhabitants still friendly, giving us to eat of their pepper-dishes and hornet's nest bread. As these Indians live at a long distance from wood, they may frequently be seen packing this bread on their backs. The women to-day were busy throwing the snow off their houses. We travelled seven or eight miles beyond Lagoonia, and encamped at the ruins of a deserted

town. On the 19th took up the line of march early, and on the 20th arrived at the Rio del Norte once, more, opposite Albuquerque. Found no grass, and consequently our horses mostly strayed off in search of something to eat. The dragoons are in quarters at Albuquerque, occupying the former residence of Gov. Armijo. They had been as far south as Secora, and on their return many of their mules and horses had sickened and died. We failed here of getting our money, but were told we should receive it at Pardeus, a town 15 or 20 miles down the river. On the 22d, again we took up our march for Pardeus, where we arrived some hours before night, and found it a well built place after the Spanish fashion, containing probably more wealth than any place of its size we have passed. Here we obtained corn for our horses, and had a fandango at night, which was broken up with a row.

We succeeded at last, on the 23d, in getting our clothing-money, forty-two dollars to a man, deducting the suttler's bill Most of the men spent their money as freely as so many sailors would; and as there was plenty of aguardiente in the place, many were intoxicated. This is the residence of the Chavis family, brothers of Chavis who was killed near a small stream on the plains. I am not an admirer of Spanish beauty; but a young girl of the Chavis family here, was one of the most lovely creatures ever seen. She was like a rose in the desert; and like a summer day in the midst of winter, she brought pleasant recollections of days past. Her beauty became celebrated, and consequently the house was the frequent resort of many of us to purchase little articles. The Spanish Mexicans use no chairs, but sit upon the floor on

a mat or carpet, beneath which is always kept a quantity of corn-shucks, which are used for making cigars, which both men and women smoke almost unceasingly from morning till night.

On the 25th we passed a Purbelo town containing 2000 inhabitants. Here Lieut. Millen had the misfortune to be thrown from his mule and dislocate his elbow joint: for the setting of which he had to pay thirty dollars. The Indians of this place are of much handsomer features than any other Purbelos I have seen. Apples, corn, &c. were obtained here cheaper than at an any other place where we have been. The Indians commonly live on better food than the Spaniards; but have much less furniture and clothing.

Nov. 28. Settlements become smaller and more distant from each other. While we have plenty of wood, many of our horses are becoming sick, either from the nature of the grass, or the cotton-wood browse. The cotton-wood trees here are so thickly clad with mistetoe, that they present a green appearance. We here learned that two men from Lafayette county, Mo. had been killed by the Indians, who discovered them while hunting for their sheep, shot them with fifteen arrows each, and drove their sheep away. Next day about thirty of our men pursued the Indians, but broke down their horses by too rapid a march on the first day, and were obliged to return. Here the men who had been detailed on the last Navajo expedition came up with us: they had experienced much hardship, the snow on the mountains being a foot deep. I obtained from one of them a specimen of petrified wood, which is said to be very abundant in the part of the country which they visited; as they frequently found stumps and

limbs, sometimes half and sometimes wholly petrified. After passing Secora, the last town of any importance on the Rio del Norte, we travelled about twenty miles, and then came up with the rest of the command, so that we were once more all together. Here the bottoms are more widely expanded, and apparently richer than in any place above, and yet here are no settlements for fear of the Indians. As we travel south, the climate becomes milder.

Dec. 10, 1846. Six months we have been in the service, and no fighting yet: but rumor says that El Paso is occupied by about 3000 Mexican troops; which rumor probably caused Col. Doniphan to order down one company of artillery. We understand also that a company under Capt. Hudson is on its way down from Santa Fe. Maj. Gilpin is ordered with 300 men to undertake his journey through the Jornada,* or Dead Man's Valley, where the road leaves the river for ninety miles, and the traveller finds neither wood nor water. Gilpin's command left on the 12th, and on the 14th we moved our camp four miles further down. On the 15th, Col. Jackson was sent on with 200 more men—and on the 18th, the remainder of us, under Col. Doniphan, took up our march. On the 18th we entered the Jornada with Capt. Hudson's company; and found water about 30 miles from the entrance, six miles to the right. The Jornada is a wide, expanded plain, with an excellent road and good grass, that is as good as dry grass can be. Here the soap-weed becomes almost a tree, growing from six to ten feet high;

* Pronounced *Hornahr*, and signifying a day's journey; it is applied to any desert road.

we made our fires of it. When dried it burns very well. The Jornada being an elevated plain, the climate is extremely cold; and many of us suffered very much on our march through, being obliged to travel by night as well as by day. We were three days in making the passage. On coming to the river we were delighted by the change of climate, which was like passing from winter to summer. We found here plenty of rushes, and our horses for once fared well. On the 23d we came up with Gilpin's command at Don Anno: To-night a prisoner was brought in, a Scotchman, supposed to be a spy. On the 24th we removed our camp 12 miles down. Here we found a dead Mexican, who was shot by one of Capt. Reid's men on guard two nights before.

Christmas day: fine morning; took up our march as usual. There was considerable grumbling in camp at Col. Doniphan's attempting to enter El Paso without cannon. Some spies were seen, but no suspicions of a battle were excited. We encamped, turned out our horses, and scattered in search of wood:—when the cry of "To arms—get your guns," &c. called the attention of every man. At first it was thought to be a false alarm, raised to see if the men would rally; and consequently the men were dilatory about getting together; but a dust below, on the river, soon told us that the enemy were at hand. We had scarcely formed a line, when the enemy in bold front were before us. Caldwell our interpreter, rode out to meet one of their principal commanders, who approached on a furious steed, bearing a black flag. He was told by Caldwell that our commander wished to see theirs. The reply was, "Come over, and he can; and if he will not, we will bring him."

Caldwell replied that we were ready. The bearer of the black flag said he asked no quarter, and should give none. Fifteen men from our company were chosen (the only mounted men) to make a charge if necessary. Very little was said to us by our officers. As the Mexicans approached, their balls whistled about us quite briskly on all sides, sometimes striking the dust before us, but mostly going over. We were commanded to reserve our fire, which we did generally, as the firing of the Mexicans disturbed us but little. A charge was made upon our left wing, when we commenced firing,—and Capt. Reid's little squad returned the charge with such success that the Mexicans ran every way as fast as possible. Some few of them who had charged upon the wagons met with a like repulse there. They had but one cannon, which we took, together with many small arms, ammunition, horses, bread, beans, blankets, &c. The real aguardiente rolled into camp right rapidly, and our men after all had a merry christmas frolic. But five men on our side were wounded, and none killed. Of the Mexicans 41 were killed, and how many wounded it is impossible to tell. Unfortunately our horses were all loose, and it was impossible to pursue them. Thus terminated the battle of the Brazito: and when it is considered that we had not more than 400 men in the ranks, and that the Mexican force numbered 1200, as afterwards stated by themselves, a more successful battle is rarely fought. We ate their bread, drank their wine, and went to bed as comfortable as if no Mexicans were near.

On the 26th we got rather a late start: passed nothing during the day worthy of note; encamped at night near a small pond of water. Some time in

the night in spite of the guard, some Mexicans succeeded in stealing about twenty of our horses. We expected a fight next day, but were met at the pass of the mountains by a man bearing a white flag, and returning our horses which had been stolen the night before. I was on picket guard in the night, and of course we were left behind. When we came up to the bearer of the flag, he gave us as much wine as we wished to drink, and some bread to eat. We entered El Paso without the firing of another gun, and the flag of the United States waved in triumph over the villa of El Paso. As we went in the people came from their houses giving us apples, pears, grapes, &c. We encamped in an old corn field amidst plenty of burrs and sand. These Mexicans are a singular people: but yesterday in arms against us—to-day every man says *amego*, or friend.

On the 5th of January, 1847, we found the dust, burrs, and wind so uncomfortable, that our Captains unanimously petitioned Col. Doniphan to obtain quarters in town,—to which he acceded; and we now find ourselves quite comfortably situated. The sale of ardent spirits to volunteers has been for some days forbidden; still many find means of getting drunk. The wine, of which there is a great abundance here, is mostly good. But one kind of apple is offered—a small, sweet, rather inferior fruit. Melons are still frequently seen for sale in the streets, and abundance of dried fruit, which can be purchased at low rates,—say from $1 to $1,50 per bushel. The currency here is mostly quarters, or small copper pieces about the size of a half cent; they pass currently for 3¼ cents; they were first put in circulation by the Mexican government to

pay the soldiers. A considerable quantity of government arms, ammunition and provisions, has been obtained by search and appropriated to our use.—The climate here is much milder than in the country above; but subject to high winds. The vineyards here are mostly enclosed by mud fences, but sometimes by a living fence, or hedge, composed of a rank briar, which grows here abundantly to the height of 10 or 15 feet, and from one to two inches in diameter. El Passo is in fact an extensive vineyard, and must in the summer be one of the most delightful places in the world. Many of the houses have an open square in the middle of them: from the street you enter the casa by a dismal door, which leads to the square, around which are the several apartments. In the middle of this square is frequently thrown up another three or four feet high, enclosed by a mud wall, in which is planted evergreens, fig-trees and flowering plants. The inhabitants seem to use but little meat, subsisting mostly on bread and fruit. We found here large cribs of corn: some perhaps of a thousand barrels. The various rumors and alarms we have, are so numerous and vague, that it is not worth while to take time or paper to mention them. The church at this place is large, and contains some tolerable carving: it has five bells, pretty much used up: only one of them making tones superior to a brass kettle.

Feb 3. To day the long expected artillery arrived: they presented quite an imposing appearance, and we felt that we were strong again; although there seems to be considerable dispute in camp whether we can safely march against Chihuahua: and I believe if a vote of the regiment was taken we would go no farther. We beat El

Passo a last and final adieu on the 8th, feeling some little regret on leaving the grapes and beno, the manzana and panada: but our commanders have said onward—and onward we must go.

On the 17th we entered the second Jornada of 60 miles. The bottoms of the Rio Del Norte to this place are wide and fertile, though uncultivated. Our company was detained to-day as a rear guard. but deliver me from rear guards hereafter, especially when passing Jornadas. About 9 o'clock at night a cold came on, and the waggons stalled in the sand: we proceeded at the rate of about a mile in four hours, and camped at about 2 o'clock, in the sand. Next day we were about six miles behind the command, and the worst road is yet to be passed through. We left about 2000 lbs. flour and some other things behind. The mail came up from Santa Fe, and informed us of the insurrection at Taos, and brought some letters from the States. We were soon relieved by Col. F. and resumed our place at the command. In the middle of the desert, with the sand-hills about us, the staff officers held a consultation whether to return or go on, as we were fearful the waggons could not get through. But in the evening the roads were found better, and we went on quite lively; though the waggons are still far behind.

We left camp on the morning of the 19th, hungry, thirsty and ill-humored,—and travelled 12 miles to water, which is extremely brackish and offensive to the smell: nevertheless we and our horses and mules partook of it eagerly. Around these fetid sulpher springs are numerous carcases of mules and horses. We then went five miles to the Lagoon, where there is plenty of good water, and where we encamped. We had but just laid

down, when a heavy storm of hail and rain came on; and as we had no tents and no wood near us, we were very uncomfortable. Having rested here one day, while the wagons came up, we took up our march on the 21st, and passed a hot spring, which burst out in the middle of the plain, in sufficient quantity to turn a small mill. To-day travelled about twenty miles, and encamped near Carrecell. On the 22d we lay by, as it was one of the windiest days I ever experienced. A detached party of ten men had been sent ahead as spies, and had taken possession of this place. Here we got some corn. On the 23d we passed another warm spring, which had been enclosed by rock, and used by the Spaniards as a bath. A sache conducted the water through lands which had formerly been cultivated, but from some cause had afterwards been deserted. Some of us took a bath in the waters of the spring, which is about blood heat. This is the largest spring I have ever seen. To-day we entered the third Jornada, where we found the road excellent; in it on the 25th we travelled about 30 miles, and encamped without wood or water.

On the 25th of February, we passed through the Jornada, and encamped at the Lagoon, a lake varying from two to three miles in width, and 20 miles long. On the shores of the lake we found abundance of an alkali resembling saleratus, which we gathered and used in our bread, and found it equally as good as saleratus. The wind was very high, and a fire from our camp kindled among the grass, and ran with great rapidity onward before us. We were consequently ordered to take up our march to get before the fire and stop it, that the subsistence for our animals might not be cut off. We attempted to check it by forming a road across,

from the main road to the lake, and firing against it: but our efforts were ineffectual. The fire broke across and defied all efforts to arrest it. Capt. Reed, however, below us, and a party of horsemen, succeeded in stopping it by cutting up the grass with their sabres, and firing against the flames. It was a very exciting scene, to witness the long train of wagons hurrying on to get through the burnt place before the main fire from behind came on; and all the mules braying, and horses neighing, conscious that some danger was at hand. However all succeded in reaching a place of safety, and no damage was done. We left our wagons on the burnt place, and encamped on the other side of the road, in order that our horses might get some grass: but about nine o'clock in the evening the fire came down from the mountains, which had been put out in the day-time by the guard, and drove us across again. I have never seen a fire scene equal to this: the fire in the mountains forming almost every almost every shape imaginable, as it flashed up the peaks and leaped across the valleys, while the plain was a perfect sea of flame.

The 26th was one of the windiest and most disagreeable days I have ever seen. We encamped at the Governor's Rancho. Here the Mexican army had been the day before, but it was now deserted, save by one poor family. We have now learned for a certainty, that at Sacramento, a rancho twenty miles distant, between three and four thousand Mexicans are entrenched, with fourteen pieces of cannon. We encamped in the plain, about 10 miles from Sacramento, on the 27th.

Took up the march early on the morning of the the 28th, and were soon informed that the Mexicans were coming forward to meet us; but it pro-

ved to be only a body of about 500, moving to our right with the intention of cutting off our wagons: but as we marched our wagons by fours and the troops between them, it rendered their effort fruitless. At about 12 o'clock we came in sight of the enemy, about one mile distant, when we turned from the road toward the left, in order to gain an eminence which the Mexicans occupied. In this movement we were completly successful: and our line formed instantly, and commenced firing by our artillery upon an advanced body of Mexican cavalry, who had formed for the purpose of charging upon us. Our first shots fell directly among them, and threw their ranks into confusion: but they soon retreated behind their artillery, which then opened a fire upon us, without doing much damage, the balls passing over or falling before us.

It was soon perceived that a charge would be necessary, to rout the enemy from their forts; and it was accordingly made by Capts. Reed and Barstow, sustained by Capt. Hudson and the First Battalion. The result was the complete discomfiture of the Mexican forces: their artillery retreated in order to occupy a high and commanding point, and their cavalry and infantry retreating in disorder. In the charge, Major Owens was killed, and sergeant Kirkpatrick of company B. mortally wounded.

During the charge a cross fire was kept up by five pieces of Mexican artillery already occupying the high point aforementioned. Another charge was now necessary, to dislodge them from that point, which was almost inaccessible, except by a road cut through the rocks directly in front of their cannon. An ascent in the rear was therefore attempted by the First Battalion, and with difficulty

accomplished; the men forcing up the howitzers over rocks which at other times would have been deemed impassable. The Second Battalion was in the mean time ascending the road, and the artillery kept up a continual fire across the valley. When we reached the summit we were astonished to find the Mexicans had all fled or were flying.—We pursued them over the rocks and ravines, and succeded in getting their cannon, ammunition and stores. The victory was complete, and we returned to camp, to occupy the ground which had been but a few hours before occupied by the enemy. The fight lasted about four hours, and would probably have lasted longer, had not night come on and prevented us from pursuing them any farther. The loss of the Mexicans in killed and wounded was probably from 300 to 500 men. Nearly 100 wagon loads of provision, and 16 pieces of artillery were taken; also 5,000 dollars in money, and considerable stock. Probably $100,000 worth of booty, much of it money, was divided among themselves by the men who took it, of which no accurate account was kept.

The writer was on the 19th, with many others, detailed to stay behind and fix up the captured cannon, and drive up stock. We took up our march with about fifteen acres of sheep, five acres of cattle, and 700 mules; and after a slow progress of about five miles from the scene of battle, we encamped for the night. Next day we took up our march rather late, and entered the city of Chihuahua at about four o'clock. Most of us were surprised at the good appearance of the city, both in regularity and extent. It is at present nearly deserted by the inhabitants, they having fled, fearing the ravages of the *barbarous yankees*.

We rode through the principal streets and public square; and on a rocky hill on the south side of the city, fired a national salute in honor of the conquest, stole wood enough to get supper, and went to bed as usual among the rocks.

March 3. A priest named Ortiz, and the rest of the prisoners taken at El Paso, were set at liberty. Many of the buildings of Chihuahua are of white stone, and present an imposing appearance. The Church is one of the most splendid buildings in America: its decorations and architectural ornaments are numerous and expensive; its cost is said to have been $2,000,000. The bull pen also attracts the notice of every traveller. It is about 300 yards in circuit; being in figure an octagon; and is well furnished with stone seats, sheltered by an arched roof. This is to be the quarters of the first battalion. In an apartment of this place, we found the red dresses, fantastic figures, arrows, &c. to excite and irritate the bull to combat. Maj. Owens was buried with the honors of war, in the Roman Catholic form, which to us was both novel and splendid. Chihuahua is watered by a spring brought by an aqueduct five or six miles over hill and valley at great expense. Mountains overlook the place on almost every side.

March 4. Peach buds are beginning to swell, and cottonwood trees to put forth, showing that summer is nigh: but the nights are still cold, and frosts frequent. I forget to mention that in the battle I once more lost my horse, but succeeded in getting a mule, which was stolen from me last night. At this place we find extensive stores, and many more Americans than I expected to see.—There are plenty of sugar candies, cakes, pies, oranges and other refreshments for sale in the

streets, where also most of their marketing is done; the articles exposed for sale being spread on mats in front of straw covered shanties, and consisting chiefly of bread, red peppers, beans, dried pumpkins and parched corn. The fountain, which occupies the public square, is worthy of notice. From the four sides of a pyramid the water spouts from a tube, and falls into a basin below, whence the people of the city mostly obtain their water. At all hours of the day women and children may be seen carrying water from it in large jars upon their heads. An old church, built by the Jesuits but never finished, was once evidently a magnificent building, but it has now mostly fallen to decay: a part of it is occupied by us for a hospital. Fine summer walks extend along the south side of the city, where there are numerous stone seats beneath the spreading trees, beside the rippling stream brought from the mountain spring; and here the weary citizen can pleasantly lounge away the hours of a hot day.—The city also boasts of a cock pit, where our soldiers amuse themselves almost every day, with seeing cock-fights.

March 20. Peach and pear trees are in full bloom, and the fig-trees are putting forth their leaves. It is rumored that Taylor and Santa Anna have had an engagement, in which Gen. Taylor was victorious. The mania for betting seems to have seized almost every one; and men who never thought of betting before, now risk their little all at the tables on the games of Faro and Monte.

Our officers as well as privates are very much divided in opinion. Some are for remaining in Chihuahua until relieved or our time expires; others for leaving immediately. March 28. The

trees are green, the air smoky, and the weather mild.

April 1. To-day witnessed a bull-fight; but as we had destroyed the retreating places of the fighters for want of wood, they could not attack the bull to advantage: and the bull also not being as furious as usual, the fight was rather tame. After several barbed arrows in the bull's neck had provoked him, a Mexican volunteered to ride him round the ring; for which exploit the audience rewarded him by throwing down quite a shower of dollars and quarters. The feat of throwing the bull by a mounted man was also exhibited with great applause. The rider seizing the bull by the tail, and making an abrupt turn with his horse, threw the bull heels over head: this was done repeatedly: and with like success he lassoed both horns and foot, throwing the animal down every time he attempted it.

On the second day of April the second battalion, artillery, and Hudson's company, took up their march for some point south—the first battalion being left alone at Chihuahua. We moved to the Plaza: and are hereafter to be under stricter regulations. On the 8th a rumor came that 5000 Mexicans with 11 pieces of artillery are coming against us from Zacatecas and Durango—in consequence of which rumor Col. Doniphan and his force returned and joined us for mutual safety. They had been about 60 miles to the South, and on their return brought 49 Mexican government horses which they captured about 40 miles below. It is discovered that the prefect of this place has given liberty to a night patrol to steal as many of our horses as they can. Gambling now seems to be nearly done with, as none of the men have any

money. The weather is most beautifully clear and sunny: by day the thermometer rises to 70; and the nights are pleasantly cool.

April 14. During the last week we have had all sorts of rumors; such as a large Mexican army approaching us, regulars coming down from Santa Fe, money and arms secreted, &c. &c. Families continue to leave the place almost every day.—There is often a slight appearance of rain, with thunder in the west, but it is from the spent clouds of California, and they commonly pass over without rain. This night, however, we had a fine rain, which lasted through most of the 15th, and which I understand is rather unusual at this season of the year: but it does not appear to affect the mud walls and roofs of the houses in the least, undoubtedly because the earth in this country contains so much gypsum. The height of the rooms in the houses varies from 12 to 15 and sometimes 20 feet: being made thus high and airy probably to promote health. Drunkenness I think much less common among the Mexicans than with us. A Mexican who was whipped for horse stealing, has just told us where we may find a dozen of our horses, secreted in houses. Anxiety to get home diminishes; and most of us are willing to stay here till our time is out, it being but one month and a half.

April 22. The weather is delightful. A species of lucerne almost ready to bloom is now furnished to us for our horses. The express which we had sent to Gen. Wool's army, arrived on the 23d of April, with 23 men from his camp. They were welcomed with real enthusiasm, and with that nervous excitement of pleasure, wrought up by meeting our friends again, which can be known only

by those who have been in similar situations. The ringing of the bells and firing of cannon added to the demonstrations of joy, which were closed in the evening with merry drunkenness. The latter I think could have been omitted, to the great advantage of all concerned. From these men we learn the particulars of the battle of Buena Vista —and learn also that we are probably to march soon for Saltillo.

On the 25th of April the artillery and commissary wagons left: and on the next day we took up our march. Encamped at a rancho; distance 26 miles. The green rushes and grass which are just springing up make it much more pleasant travelling than heretofore. We find at our camp plenty of water; and about an acre of green clover, part of which we pulled with our hands, and gave to our horses. Here also was a specimen of a plant or vegetable, from which the Spanish Mexicans make mescal, a very pungent strong drink.

On the 27th we took an early start, travelled about 25 miles, passed through a considerable town called Santa Cruz, and encamped at a wealthy rancho. At this farm, agriculture appears to be carried on to much better advantage than at any place we have before passed; the proprietor annually raising about 15,000 barrels of corn, 5,000 bushels wheat, with beans, &c. in good proportion, besides a large quantity of cotton. He has a fine mill and cotton gin turned by water. Every thing looks flourishing. The wheat is just heading. As large crops are produced here, I believe, as in the States. Any amount of land may be irrigated: and I think irrigation preferable to rain, as the ditch serves for a fence, and there is no danger of flood or drought, but the water can be let on

whenever it is wanted. One man can irrigate ten acres in a day. The climate here is delightful; and the cultivator is in no danger from the storm nor the drought; but sometimes the dreadful Apache Indian comes down from the mountain, and drives off in a moment the increase of years. We travelled 25 miles on the 29th, and encamped at a rancho. But two days before, the Apache Indians had in open day driven off 400 head of stock from this rancho. Next day we travelled 35 miles, and encamped opposite St. Rosalita, a considerable town. The river Conchos, which waters these several towns and ranchos, is a considerable stream.

This place was entrenched to prevent the approach of Gen. Wool upon Chihuahua. Here are large cottonwood trees, beneath which we found a very pleasant camp. On the first day of May, we had a general inspection of arms; and a report was made of those lost, together with lost horses, &c. On the 6th we encamped at a rancho where we got half a ration for our horses, and plenty of hot water, of which there are two splendid springs.

We travelled 30 miles on the 8th, and encamped at Mapime, a town of considerable importance in the mining business. And on the 9th rode 25 miles, and encamped at a large rancho, where they were making mescal, an intoxicating liquor.

The mescal plant is the most valuable vegetable production I have ever seen; attaining sometimes the height of 30 and even 40 feet, and four feet in diameter. The Mexicans eat the stalk, both boiled and raw; make mescal and two or three other kinds of liquors from it, among which is palque, a drink resembling beer; manufacture

elegant summer hats and likewise rope and bagging from the leaf; make their cart bodies of the stalks: and the whole vegetable when planted in rows makes a fence which cannot be climbed over by man nor beast; the remnants left after making ropes and mescal, are converted into sugar and food for stock; and the people cover and partly build their houses from this tree.

On the 10th we travelled 35 miles and encamped on the banks of the river Nasas, which is a considerable stream. Here we saw corn as high as our heads; and the land must be exceedingly fertile; but the river is evidently subject to overflow. We travelled 30 miles further down the bottoms of the river Nasas on the 11th. Here the country appears to be rich, and abounds with a luxuriant growth of weeds and muskeet. We encamped at a rancho or town where the water was very bad, as the river had dried up, except some few holes. The next day we travelled 25 miles over a similar country, and encamped without corn or grass at a poor rancho on the river Nasas. Our horses are very much troubled in drinking, on account of the abundance of leeches, which endeavor to get into their mouths—a hundred perhaps striving at once.

On the 12th we encamped at a rancho which is owned by Don Manuel who lives at Perres. Here about 60 Apache Indians, and 25 of our men who were in advance, had quite a battle, in which the Indians were defeated, and we succeeded in capturing 500 horses, killed 13 Indians, and released 18 Spanish captives, 12 of whom were boys and 6 girls, two of the latter being about 16 years old. They had been very cruelly treated. The Indians had obtained them at San Luis Potosi. It was

known to Don Manuel, Governor of Parras, that they must pass a certain gap of the mountain near this rancho, and he persuaded Capt. Reed (who was at Parras) and some of his men to go back and attack them. This battle followed. Don Manuel presented each man who was in the battle with a mule or a horse, whichever he might choose. On the 14th we travelled 30 miles and encamped at Parras, one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen.

The country through which we have lately passed has been extremely sterile; for most of the way not a blade of grass was to be seen, and where there was any, it was as dry as a nearly vertical sun could make it. No water was to be found, except at the long intervals at which we encamped, which renders it very dangerous for travellers should they get off the road. The whole country may well be called, as some maps style it, a *staked plain*, enclosed by barren and rocky mountains.

The change of appearance for the better when we come to Parras can hardly be imagined. Here the fig-tree, with its dark green leaves, the luxuriant vine, the apricot and apple are growing side by side. It is in fact a garden of fruits, enclosed by hedge fences of rose-bushes mingled with the majestic *maral* plant (*Agave Americana*) pointing its fierce bayonets at every thing which approaches. Green fields of wheat are seen beside others already white for the harvest; and corn as high as our heads, while other fields are just being prepared for planting. Parras is well watered: in almost every street the crystal stream comes rippling down in the rock gutters, watering the beautiful cotton-wood trees which are planted

beside them. I must not forget to mention the prickly pear, which here attains the height of 15 or 20 feet, is crowned with fruit, and presents a beautiful and imposing appearance. We lay by on the 15th, and found it very comfortable; for we had been marching through sand and dust, sometimes so thick that we could not see ten steps before us. In fact the earth in some places was complete dust, six or eight inches deep.

Last night one of the artillerymen, being somewhat behind the command, was surrounded and very badly beaten with stones, by some Mexicans; and to-day has been distinguished by several rows. A Mexican had robbed a soldier of two dollars, and hid himself in a house: three or four men tried to break the door, meaning to do some violence to the thief: but Capt. Reid rushed among them, and cutting right and left with his sabre, soon dispersed them. Some artillerymen and waggoners had an affray with some Mexicans, killed two, and wounded more. At 8 in the evening the report of a gun disturbed the camp; one more Mexican was killed, and one wounded. Our officers therefore detailed an extra guard of 32 men to patrol the streets: the camp in great excitement. I should have mentioned that on the first day after we arrived at the Rio Nasas, we buried a man named Ferguson, the same man who was bitten by a rattlesnake in June. We also buried two other men on the same day. It is almost impossible for a sick man to live, at the rate we are now hurrying through dust and heat, for the well can scarcely bear it. We have learned beyond doubt, that Gen. Scott and Santa Anna have had a great fight at the National Bridge, in which Gen. Scott was completely successful, and so scattered Santa

Anna's forces that he was able to reach Mexico with only 1500 men.

We marched from Parras to Buena Vista in two and a half days, where we found a part of Gen. Wool's command. The climate here is much cooler, owing undoubtedly to its superior elevation and its proximity to mountains. Here we were received by Gen. Wool and proceeded on to Monterey and Walnut Grove, where we were received by Gen. Taylor. Montery and Saltillo are inferior in size, and much inferior in wealth and style of building to Chihuahua.

At Mier we saw a Mexican shot by the Texan Rangers. He had been taken by a scouting party, and confessed he had been a leader in the massacre of the waggoners, committed near this place. He died like a brave man, or rather with stoic indifference. When he was asked whether he would have his eyes bandaged or not, his reply was no, he would die facing his enemy. He received the last office of benediction from the priest with perfect composure, struck fire the first stroke of his flint to light his cigar, and commenced smoking as calmly as though he was about to take dinner. When the eight rifles were raised and cocked, not a muscle moved to betoken agitation, but he took his cigar from his mouth, held it between his fingers till the word fire was given, and in an instant the warm blood spouted from his forehead and breast, and he fell dead. We waited a moment until he was carried off by some women, when we turned our horses and resumed our march in silence, sincerely regretting that so brave a man should die in such a manner.

When we left Camargo for the Rio Grande, we marched with but little regard to order, as the dis-

tance is but nine miles, and as there were strong garrisons at both places. One of the men, named Swain, was about sixty yards in advance of the column, which was much scattered; when suddenly a Mexican rode from the chapparral and shot him through the heart, dismounted, robbed him of his rifle and sabre, and rode off again into the chapparral, defying all pursuit. A party afterwards went in pursuit, and brought into camp seven suspicious Mexicans. No proof could be found against them, but our men were so much excited as to determine they should not escape, whether guilty or innocent: some of them therefore lay in ambush among the chapparral by the roadside, and killed three of the seven.

At Reynosa we were obliged to lay by three days in one of the heaviest rains that ever fall from the heavens. Sleeping in the deep mud and water was rather uncomfortable, but we minded it little in comparison with being fly blown, as we were every night, as we lay in the mud and water without tents or shelter. Our blankets and mess-kids were covered with fly-blows and maggots, also the pans we had cooked in over night, and even our guns and sabres, while our persons swarmed with the creeping vermin. In the morning we threw away our blankets, and cleansed ourselves as best we could. When it did not rain the sun poured down his rays hot upon us, and millions innumerable of these blue flies buzzed about us. Deliver me from that Mexican plague the blue fly.

When we had just passed through the second Jornada of 60 miles, an express came in from the train, which had been left 15 miles behind, that the cattle and mules had fallen down through heat

and thirst, their tongues extended and swollen, and were unable to proceed any farther. Our officers were troubled, but nothing could be done. Presently the mountains were enveloped in clouds, the thunders rolled, and the rain and hail came down in torrents. The plain was flooded, and the cattle drank as they lay upon the ground; and at twelve o'clock at night the train came in to camp. The occurrence of rain at this season, when it is rare, with the other circumstances, impressed the Mexicans with the idea that God was for us and against them; as, had it not been for this rain, our train could have proceeded no farther. We had also a fine rain just before we left Chihuahua; and the Mexicans said, God is for you, he has made it rain, that the green grass might grow for your horses and mules: it never rained before at this time of the year.

Our arduous marches were closed by our arrival at Brazos Santiago near Matamoras, June 9th, having travelled from Chihuahua 900 miles to this place, in forty-five days.

On the 16th June, 1847, we reached New-Orleans and were discharged, having in twelve months marched over six thousand miles.